

Theme: There is an invisible war between God's angelic forces and the forces of Satan which is related to and affects the visible rise and fall of human kingdoms and the plight of God's people, but God's Sovereign Plan will be accomplished in the end!

I. Intro - USMC birthday/Veterans Day/A Long Final Vision

- A. Daniel is given one final vision - chapters 10-12!
- B. We will cover this over two weeks
 - 1. The vision gives greater detail to much of what has already been covered
 - 2. Chapter 11 gives a lot of detail about the rise of Greece, and especially Antiochus Epiphanes
 - 3. Since we covered this a lot in Daniel 8, I will only mention it briefly
 - 4. Our main focus today will be on Daniel 10
 - 5. We will then look at Daniel 12 next week
- C. Daniel 10-11 are unusual chapters!
- D. What does God reveal here? How do we apply it today?

II. The Coming Visible Kingdoms and Wars

- A. Daniel 11 gives detail about Persia & especially Greece

Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. ³ Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. ⁴After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others. Daniel 11:2-4

- 1. We have seen this before - Persia then Alexander
- 2. Alexander's kingdom split into four parts
- 3. This was all seen in Daniel 2, 7, and 8
- B. The kings of the North and South

Then the king of the South will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. Daniel 11:11

 - 1. South - Ptolemies in Egypt (Israel's perspective)
 - 2. North - Seleucids in Syria (Israel's perspective)
 - 3. Describes many kings and over 150 years of time
 - 4. It also has a real focus on Antiochus Epiphanes who we looked at in Daniel 8
 - 5. Commentaries will give specific info on all this
- C. A final king/kingdom

The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. Daniel 11:36

 - 1. Daniel 11:36-45 describes a different king - not the North or South, and both fight against him (v40)
 - 2. Some take as the antiChrist; I think it is primarily Rome but is also a type of the spirit of antiChrist
 - 3. In either event, chapter 11 is about earthly, visible kingdoms and wars
 - 4. We have seen this several times before in Daniel

III. The Invisible War

A. Daniel is praying and fasting again and receives a vision

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Beltshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. ² At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. ³ I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over. ⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, Daniel 10:1–4

1. v1 - Third year of Cyrus - two years after Daniel 9
2. This forms a big chiasm with Daniel 1
 - a. Beltshazzar/Daniel - first and last times
 - b. Abstaining from choice food in both places
 - c. Beginning and end of exile
3. Exiles have returned but are facing great opposition
 - a. Exiles were opposed, got discouraged, and stopped building the Temple
 - b. See books of Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah for more
4. Daniel spends three weeks mourning and in prayer
 - a. He is mourning, praying, and under a partial fast
 - b. This includes the time of Passover - a reminder of the first great exodus of God's people
 - c. The plight of the returning exiles prompts great concern for Daniel, and he enters an extended period of serious prayer and fasting.
5. v1 - Daniel is given a vision about a great war

B. A vision of a heavenly man (Christ?)

I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. ⁶ His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. ⁷ I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. ⁹ Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. Daniel 10:5–9

1. Daniel has a vision of a heavenly messenger
2. Either an angel or more likely a Christophany
 - a. John has a similar vision of Christ in Revelation 1
 - b. Ezekiel has a similar vision of God in Ezekiel 1
 - c. Daniel sees and hears Him, but companions do not - just like Paul on the road to Damascus
 - d. All of this leads me to think it is Christ - as in Daniel 3 and Daniel 7
3. This is a terrifying vision!
 - a. Daniel's companions flee and hide
 - b. Daniel is drained of strength, becomes pale, and falls asleep (like Abram in Genesis 15)
 - c. Daniel has to be told "Do not fear" 2x (v12,19)
 - d. Daniel is so weakened he can't stand or speak and has to be strengthened by an angel 3x (v10, 16, 18)

- e. This is what it is like to receive a real vision from God - so be suspect of anyone who says they chatted with God like buddies!

C. The invisible war surrounding Daniel's prayers

Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

¹³But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Daniel 10:12–13

1. The angel had been sent to Daniel the first day
2. He was delayed by the prince of Persia
3. Refers to a demonic power associated with Persia
 - a. No human could delay an angel!
 - b. Michael is the archangel and he is also called a prince (specifically of Israel)
4. This is a rare insight into the fact that our prayers are part of an invisible war between powerful angels of God and fallen angels in league with Satan.

D. The invisible war surrounding human events

So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; ²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. ^{11:1} And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.) Daniel 10:20–11:1

1. The angel, Michael, and the demonic powers surrounding Persia and Greece will be in conflict.

2. This is related to what is revealed in chapter 11 - the future of Persia, the coming of Alexander, and the future battles between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires.
3. There is an invisible war between God's angelic forces and the forces of Satan and this invisible war is related to and affects the visible rise and fall of human kingdoms.
4. The book of Truth - God's eternal decree and plan that is sovereign over all of human history.
5. Satan and his powers fight against the angels and the people of God, but God's Sovereign Plan will be accomplished in the end!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I have a proper understanding of the invisible war?

1. Daniel 10 gives a rare, fascinating glimpse into this invisible war that rages all around us!
2. There are two great dangers that we must avoid
 - a. Some act as if the invisible war does not exist or is not important
 1. Such Christians are living as functional materialists
 2. This leads to Christians acting in a worldly manner, trying to accomplish heavenly purposes with worldly weapons
 3. Whenever Christians and the Church try to use worldly weapons such as political and military strength it has ultimately been disastrous for the Church and brought disrepute to the Gospel.
 4. Everything we do for God - holy living, evangelism, apologetics, raising a godly family - is ultimately spiritual in nature and must be addressed by spiritual resources.

- b. Some act as if they have far more information about the invisible war than God has revealed to humans
 - 1. We are given VERY little information in Scripture about this invisible war!
 - 2. We must remember Daniel was given direct special revelation from God - and this no longer happens because the Bible is complete.
 - 3. People who claim they have a “word from God” about God’s will behind local, national, or international political and military struggles are WRONG - they do not, for God does not do this today.
 - 4. Remember that Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome were all both fighting against God and His people AND fulfilling God’s purposes and plan. We simply do not have the wisdom or detailed knowledge to unravel such things before or as they are happening.
 - 5. Notice Daniel does not begin to claim authority over these demonic powers, nor do we have any record that Paul did so in Athens. Their responsibility was different than this - and so is ours!

B. Do I have a proper response to the invisible war?

- 1. We are called to remember Christ has already won the war, and to engage in spiritual warfare and stand strong even through persecution.
- 2. Christ has already won the war!
And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2:15
 - a. At the Cross, Christ won the war!
 - b. Daniel looked forward to God’s victory, but we look back and know the war is won!
 - c. In this age of the “now but not yet” the battle continues to rage, but the outcome has already been determined and won by Christ!

- d. We must remind ourselves us this every day!
- 3. We engage in spiritual warfare through personal repentance, prayer, and proclamation of the Word
 - a. Remember Daniel was again in prayer and fasting and humbling himself (v12), and as we saw in Daniel 9 this is full of personal repentance and confession of sin.
 - b. James links our resistance to Satan and the power of prayer to the confession of sin and repentance
Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. James 4:7–8
Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16
 - 1. Resistance to the devil is by submitting to God, which is done by washing our hands and purifying our hearts of sin!
 - 2. Prayer is powerful and effective - which is linked to confessing my own sin!
 - 3. No amount of spiritual warfare in prayer, claiming victory, etc will be of any value if our lives are worldly, full of sin, and contradictory to the Word of God.
 - c. The second key part of spiritual warfare is prayer
For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms...¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Ephesians 6:12, 18

1. Our struggle is NOT with other humans - Persia or Greece - but spiritual powers.
 2. God has given us spiritual armor for this war (see Ephesians 6:13-17)
 3. The way we are part of God working out His plan is praying for His kingdom to come, His will to be done, praying for other believers, for the Gospel to prosper - things directly revealed in Scripture!
- d. The third part of spiritual warfare is proclaiming the Word and refusing to compromise on God's truth
- Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. Eph. 6:19-20

1. The concern that the Gospel be proclaimed
2. This is not just the responsibility of apostles or leaders - we are all called to proclaim God's Word
3. This may result in persecution - Paul was in chains!
4. Daniel 11:30, 32 mentions how Antiochus will try to get people to compromise - but those who know God will resist him!
5. Like Paul, Daniel, and the people of Antiochus' day we may not compromise God's Word.
6. Even if we suffer for remaining faithful, God will use this to overcome evil and accomplish His will!

C. A Table In the Presence of Our Enemies

1. This spiritual warfare is a constant reality
2. But the Lord's Table is a place of respite & renewal
3. Our enemies can only see and gnash their teeth as our Lord feeds and cares for us
4. Come and be fed by our Lord!

The Invisible War

Daniel 10-11 (Daniel 10-11:4)

November 14, 2021

Communion

St. Patrick's Breastplate Prayer

Teaching keywords: Spiritual warfare; Sovereignty of God; prayer; Satan and demons; angels; Word of God

May Christ be your shield today: Christ before you; Christ behind you; Christ beneath you; Christ above you; Christ on your right; Christ on your left; May Christ be with you, Christ be in you alone and in multitude, near and afar; for all you face and for all your life, that you may live in the protection and power of his blessing.

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.² At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks.³ I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris,⁵ I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist.⁶ His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.⁷ I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves.

⁸ So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. ⁹ Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. ¹⁰ A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

¹² Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ¹³ But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

¹⁵ While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. ¹⁶ Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. ¹⁷ How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”

¹⁸ Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. ¹⁹ “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.” ²⁰ So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; ²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth.

(No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. ^{11:1} And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.) ² “Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.

³ Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. ⁴ After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others. Daniel 10:1–11:4